

**BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

In the Matter of the Revocation	)	<b>ORDER OF</b>
	)	
or Suspension of the Educator's	)	<b>SUMMARY SUSPENSION</b>
	)	
Certificate of Robert Demond Sutton	)	
	)	
Certificate #193134	)	

**SUMMARY OF THE CASE**

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on July 21, 2004. The State Department of Education (Department) will send a notice of the possible revocation of his South Carolina teaching certificate #193134 (certificate) to Mr. Robert Demond Sutton, by certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. In the interim in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. §1-23-370(c) (1986), the Department requested that the State Board summarily suspend Mr. Sutton's certificate until a due process hearing is held, or this matter is otherwise resolved. The Department has reason to believe, due to the nature of the misconduct that led to his arrest, that Mr. Sutton may pose a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of students that may be under his instruction. This summary suspension will be reported to all school districts in South Carolina and the NASDTEC Clearinghouse as a summary suspension pending due process proceedings. After considering the evidence presented by the Department, the State Board voted to summarily suspend Mr. Sutton's certificate until a due process hearing is held, or this matter is otherwise resolved.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

Mr. Sutton holds a valid South Carolina certificate, and has just over eight years of teaching experience. On July 7, 2004, he turned himself in to law enforcement and is charged with Criminal Sexual Conduct Second Degree with a Minor and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor. Mr. Sutton admitted to law enforcement that while he was a teacher at Ridgeview High School in Richland School District Two during the 2002-2003 school year, he had a seven month sexual relationship with a fifteen-year old female student.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

“The South Carolina Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person,” S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). Just cause includes: “Unprofessional conduct,” and “Crime against the law of this State or the United States,” S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (1986), “If the agency finds that public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action, and incorporates a finding to that effect in its order, summary suspension of a license may be ordered pending proceedings for revocation or other action.” The State Board finds that there is reason to believe that Mr. Sutton may pose a danger or threat to the welfare of students that may be under his instruction. Accordingly, the State Board hereby summarily suspends Mr. Sutton’s certificate # 182283 until a due process hearing is held, or this matter is otherwise resolved.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Mary E. Jones  
Chair

Columbia, South Carolina  
July 21, 2004